(b) The short-falls in achievement of flow of cooperative credit to agriculturists during the first two years of the 7th Five Year Plan period were mainly due to natural calamities and wilful default in cooperatives resulting in slow recycling of funds.

(c) The State and U.T. Governments have been advised from time to time to take appropriate action in this regard for achieving the plan target.

Working of public sector fertilizer units

442. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK:

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news report which appeared in the "Times of India" of the 8th January, 1988 wherein it has been stated that public sector fertiliser units are still in the red and if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) whether Government propose to inquire into the working of all the fertiliser units in the country through a High Powered Committee to suggest improvements; and

(c) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FERTLIZERS IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. PRABHU): (a) Yes, Sir; the newspaper report states that during 1986-87 Fertilizer Corporation of India (FCI) and Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation (HFC) continued to be in the red while Projects & Development India Limited (PDIL) joined their ranks as a loss-incurring concern though it had made a small operational profit. The losses incurred by FCI and HFC have been mainly due to design deficiencies and power and equipment problems. PDIL earned an operating profit of Rs. 26 lakhs, although, after adjusting an expenditure of Rs. 65 lakhs relating to earlier year the net result is a loss of Rs. 39 lakhs.

(b) and (c) No, Sir; as the working of the Public Sector fertilizer companies, including sick companies, is reviewed periodically and steps are taken to improve their performance, there is no proposal, at present to appoint a High Powered Committee.

Increase in the prices of aluminium

443. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the prices of aluminium had been increased by Government during the 3rd week of January, 1988;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) to what extent it has affected the common man in the country; and

(d) whether Government propose to provide aluminium to the small scale industry on subsidised rates; if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MINES IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI RAMANAND YADAV): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The prices of primary aluminium are statutorily controlled and were revised with effect from 19-1-1988 after taking into account all relevant factors especially the increases in power tariff by some of the State Governments.

(c) The increase in the sale price of primary aluminium has been less than six per cent. The present sale price is internationally competitive despite our high power rates. There has been no representation from the trading community.

(d) Does not arise.